

IELTS SPEAKING SAMPLES

PART 2 TOPIC FORECAST

FROM SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER

70 TOPICS ALL COVERED

NOTES

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1. Describe a couple you know who have a happy marriage

Describe a couple you know who have a happy marriage

You should say:

- Who they are
- How you know them
- What they usually do together

And how you feel about their marriage.

Sample

Well, I would like to talk about my own parents whose marriage is undoubtedly a happy one. They have been married for 30 years now and are the perfect couple in my eyes.

Well, my mother and father are now in their 60's and they are still really busy with their **nine to five jobs** in a government office, but I think that both of them are going to retire later this year. During 30 years of marriage, my parents have **been through thick and thin** together but have never lost their love for each other. My parents usually just show their affection simply by always being honest with each other and sharing their true feelings. Their mutual understanding for each other is so profound that sometimes it only takes one look to realise what the other is thinking.

Of course they still have minor **tiffs** every now and then, you know, things like who will have to pick up the kids or who gets the TV remote. However, my dad is always the first one to give in and turn to comfort my mother. I think that little action is actually the key to my parents' **long lasting** relationship.

To me, mom and dad are a **perfect match** and I admire their love for each other so much. Hopefully, in the future, I will have a partner that cares for me as much as my parents care for each other.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **A nine to five job:** Công việc bình thường
2. **Through thick and thin:** Vượt qua sóng gió
3. **A tiff:** Cãi vã
4. **A long lasting relationship:** Mối quan hệ dài lâu
5. **A perfect match:** Cặp đôi hoàn hảo

2. Describe a helpful person at work or at school

Describe a helpful person at work or school

You should say:

- Who it was
- What this person did
- How this person helped

And explain how you felt after this person helped you.

Sample

I would like to describe one of my teachers who taught me at high school. She **had a great influence on** me and was the person who helped me succeed in my university entrance examination. Her name is Linh and she taught me English for 3 years of high school and was also my form teacher. She was **in her late 40's** then but looked much younger than her age.

I was really influenced by the way she taught us in class. Her thoroughness in teaching inspired me to study English, even though I had not been interested in it before. We never felt bored in her classes, she always told us interesting stories about British and American culture and people, and also organized some games so that we could learn new vocabulary and grammar effortlessly.

I remember that during the three months before the university entrance exam, which was the most important exam of my life, she had delivered some free classes for the students who weren't quite **up to standard**, including myself. She patiently guided us through difficult questions and provided many useful tips to help deal with the test. Thanks to her **effective teaching method** and **great dedication**, I was able to pass the university entrance exam with almost a perfect score in English.

Although I have graduated from high school and now study in Hanoi, I often visit her on the holidays and tell her about my daily life in the big city and she's always available to give me some advice about any problems I have. I am forever grateful to have Mrs. Linh in my life.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **To have a great influence on someone:** Có tác động lớn đến ai
2. **In one's late 40's:** Ở độ tuổi gần 50
3. **Up to standard:** Đạt chuẩn
4. **Effective teaching method:** Phương pháp giảng dạy hiệu quả
5. **Great dedication:** Sự cống hiến lớn

3. Describe a new friend you've made recently

Describe a new friend you've made recently

You should say:

- Who the person is
- What kind of person he/she is
- How you met this person

And explain why you made friends with him/her

Sample

I am going to talk about Mrs. Kim who is a lovely lady that I recently **befriended**.

I started college life 3 months ago and on my first day of school I was unable to **navigate my way to** my new university where I was studying. Google Maps wasn't as helpful as I thought it would be and I couldn't **figure out the way** by asking the locals either. So, after many hours of wandering around, I finally **resorted to** asking a lady who was selling noodles from a food cart near where I was standing. I asked the lady if she knew the way to the HCMC University of Education, and she just smiled and pointed at the large, five-story building across the road. Turns out I was there all along! So, after thanking the lady, we had a little chat and I found out she also came from Ninh Thuan, which is my hometown! We immediately became good friends and now her food cart has become my favorite **lunch spot** whenever I'm at university.

So I guess the main reason that Mrs. Kim and I have become good friends is basically because I think she's a really sweet lady. As I've gotten to know her better I've realized that she's had quite **a tough life**, yet she has managed to maintain a sweet and gentle personality that many other women who have been through struggles like her would have lost by now. I guess the other reason we get on so well is because we share the same hometown, and I tend to get on well with people from my hometown. Sometimes I think the best friendships are made so unexpectedly.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Befriend someone:** Làm bạn với ai
2. **Navigate my way to:** Tìm đường đến đâu
3. **To wander around:** Đi lang thang
4. **Resort to something/do-ing something:** Phải dùng đến/làm đến điều gì
5. **One's favourite lunch spot:** Địa điểm ăn trưa yêu thích
6. **A tough life:** Cuộc sống cơ cực

4. Describe a polite person you met

Describe a polite person you met

You should say:

- Who the person is
- How you know the person
- What the person looks like

And explain why you think the person is polite.

Sample

Well, the person I'd like to talk to you about is a very good friend of mine, Mai. She must be one of the nicest and most polite individuals I know. We've basically known each other since forever because we were in the same class from high school through to college. She is like my **partner in crime** and we can share everything together from schoolwork to our love lives.

You know, the first time I met her she **left a deep impression** on me because on the first day of school I got lost while trying to find my classroom and she really helped me out. Surprisingly, we were also arranged by the teacher to be desk-mates.

And the reason why I think she's so polite is simply because she has really **good manners**. She abuses the word "thank you" even on the slightest occasion. For instance, I've noticed that whenever we eat at a restaurant, she will thank the waiters whenever they bring a dish to the table. And another example would be that every time she gets off a bus, she will always say thank you to the driver, which a lot of people probably think isn't necessary, but I'm sure the waiters and bus drivers really appreciate it. Finally, whenever our classmates ask her to help them with difficult homework, she never complains or shows any **hesitation**. And due to this, she always **maintains a good reputation** thanks to her politeness.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **One's partner in crime:** Bạn rất thân
2. **Leave a deep impression on someone:** Để lại ấn tượng mạnh đến ai đó
3. **Have good manners:** Biết điều
4. **Hesitation:** Sự lưỡng lự
5. **Maintain a good reputation:** Giữ được danh tiếng tốt

5. Describe a family member who has had an important influence on you

Describe a family member who has had an important influence on you

You should say:

- Who the person is;
- What kind of person he or she is;
- What this person has done to influence you;

And explain why you think this person is important to you.

Sample

I am going to talk about my mother who has played an essential role in my life. She is my guardian, my friend and my **role model**.

My mother is in her forties now, but she still **maintains a youthful look**. In terms of personality, she is an extremely compassionate and kind-hearted person who always takes care of her children. She really is a mother and a friend to me as she always gives me valuable advice and is willing to stand by me through all **the ups and downs** of my life. Although sometimes she **drives me crazy** due to her being a perfectionist, I still hold so much pride and respect for her.

I am also influenced by her **strong-will**. Ever since she was young, she had to learn to be independent as my grandparents were constantly **on the go**. She had to take care of almost everything: her younger brother, household chores and herself. Such challenges shaped her into the strong person that she is now.

Her determination, as well as her perseverance, are really something for us to look up to. And I keep reminding myself every day to be as strong as my mother, a real-life “wonder woman.”

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Role model:** Hình mẫu
2. **Maintain a youthful look:** Giữ được bề ngoài trẻ trung
3. **The ups and downs:** Thăng trầm
4. **Drive someone crazy:** Làm cho ai đó phát điên
5. **Strong-will:** Ý chí mạnh mẽ
6. **On the go:** Rất bận rộn

6. Describe an invention that changed people's lives

Describe an invention that changed people's lives

You should say:

- What it was
- Who invented it
- When it was invented

And explain how it changed people's lives

Sample

I would like to talk about the telephone which, in my opinion, is one of the most **revolutionary creations** that has changed our lives.

As far as I know, Alexander Graham Bell was the father of this terrific device and he invented it in the last century through a lot of **trial and error**.

It is no exaggeration to say that human life has completely changed since the first telephone was devised. A few centuries ago people could only communicate long distances through writing letters, which could take ages to be delivered. And in the case of emergencies or **confidential information**, writing letters really wasn't an effective way of communicating.

So, one of the main reasons that I believe that the telephone has changed people's lives is simply by making communication between people so much faster, easier and more convenient than ever before. These days when you need to **get in contact with** somebody, all you need to do is pick up your phone, dial a few numbers and wait for them to answer. And if they don't answer, then you can usually just leave a voice message for them to let them know what it is you wanted to tell them.

Furthermore, I believe that communication is at the core of social development, and I think that the advent of the telephone has **made a great contribution to** this area of life.

So, whether the information is urgent, confidential, or even down right unnecessary, I think that the telephone has made a massive difference to people's lives and our societies as well.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **A revolutionary creation:** Sự phát minh mang tính cách mạng
2. **Trial and error:** Rất nhiều lần thử nghiệm và thất bại
3. **It is no exaggeration to say that:** Để ám chỉ điều gì đó là sự thật, không nói quá lên
4. **Confidential information:** Thông tin tuyệt mật
5. **Get in contact with someone:** Liên lạc với ai
6. **Make a great contribution to something:** Góp hiến lớn cho cái gì

7. Describe your favorite piece of clothing

Describe your favorite piece of clothing

You should say:

- Where you got it
- When you got it
- How often you wear it

And explain why it is your favorite piece of clothing.

Sample

Well, I would like to tell you about a pair of ripped jeans that are my favorite item among all the things I have in my wardrobe.

You know, I bought them for an unbelievably cheap price a long time ago in **a second-hand clothing store**. At that point, ripped jeans were really popular and everybody in my school was keen on them. So, whenever I put these jeans on, I felt really stylish and thought I really **stood out from the crowd**. After a while though, trends started to change, but I refused to abandon my jeans. I wore them almost everywhere, from home to school and only changed them for formal events such as a ceremony or a wedding. Sometimes I even slept in my jeans because they were so comfortable.

Actually, it is quite easy to understand why I fancy these jeans so much. Firstly, they instantly create a stylish and fashionable look for the wearer. Secondly, jeans are easy to **mix and match** and I can wear them with heaps of different shirts without worrying about looking ridiculous in other people's eyes. And lastly, denim is so tough that it can't be torn, so I can have them for a long time and save a great deal of money.

All in all, I love my jeans and cannot get through a day without them. I think such an item should be made **trendy** again so that the youngsters nowadays can really get to know their awesomeness.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **A second-hand clothing store:** Cửa hàng quần áo 'se cũn hen'
2. **Stand out from the crowd:** Nổi bật giữa đám đông
3. **Mix and match:** Dễ kết hợp với đồ khác
4. **Trendy:** Xu hướng

8. Describe a book that you would like to read again

Describe a book that you would like to read again

You should say:

- What the book was about
- Why you read it the first place
- What you learned from this book

And explain why you would like to read it again.

Sample

Okay so I would like to tell you about the book called Harry Potter, which is a **fantasy novel**, written by the British author J. K. Rowling. It's one that I can reread **time and time again**.

The book describes the life of a young wizard named Harry Potter and his two best friends, Ron and Hermione. Harry has to struggle to kill the Dark wizard Lord Voldemort, whose aim is to become immortal and destroy all those who stand in his way of ruling the world.

The reason why this book **comes to mind** is that it is a reminder of my childhood. It was a gift for my birthday from my parents to reward my high score in an exam at school. Up until now, I can still remember clearly how fascinated I was when I received it.

Thanks to this book, I realized that determination and effort play essential roles in achieving my goals. Since then, I have always worked hard to **overcome all obstacles** and challenges in my life.

Harry Potter will always be on my to-read list for a number of reasons. Firstly, I have always been a great admirer of science fiction books so I love the way that the author describes the whole magical world with the magic school, Hogwarts, and the flying brooms. Secondly, reading this book not only helps me to relax after a long day of work or study but also cheers me up whenever I am feeling **blue**.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Fantasy novel:** Tiểu thuyết giả tưởng
2. **Time and time again:** Lặp đi lặp lại
3. **Come to mind:** Xuất hiện trong đầu
4. **A reminder of one's childhood:** Làm ai đó nhớ lại tuổi thơ
5. **Overcome all obstacles:** Vượt qua mọi rào cản
6. **Feeling blue:** Cảm thấy buồn chán mệt mỏi

9. Describe a city or town you have been to

Describe a city or town you have been to

You should say:

- Where it is
- When you visited it
- What you did there

And explain why you like it

Sample

I'd like to talk about Singapore, one of several cities I have visited and really enjoyed. I vacationed in this wonderful city last summer with my sister, Min, and we stayed there for 5 days.

Singapore is a **state-city** located to the Southeast of Vietnam and it took us only 2 hours to fly there from Hanoi.

When I arrived in Singapore, I was quite impressed by the way the city looked. The streets were incredibly clean, I could walk around the city all day and come back home without any dirt on my shoes. During my stay in Singapore, I did some shopping and visited some **famous landmarks** like the Merlion statue, Singapore zoo and **the botanical gardens**.

For me, Singapore is well worth visiting for many reasons. Firstly, the public transport system in Singapore is extremely reliable. People don't have to spend hours waiting for buses or trains, and the staff are very friendly and helpful. Another thing that I miss about Singapore is its **multi-cultural nature**. During the 5 days that I spent in Singapore, I **bumped into** people from many different countries. English is the first language of this country so it was great to get the chance to practice my English-speaking skills with the local people and also other tourists. Five days in Singapore passed by so fast that I wish I could've stayed a bit longer.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **A state-city:** Thành phố quốc gia
2. **A famous landmark:** Địa danh nổi tiếng
3. **A botanical garden:** Vườn thực vật
4. **Multi-cultural nature:** Môi trường đa văn hóa
5. **Bump into someone:** Gặp ai

10. Describe a place you visited

Describe a place you visited

You should say:

- where it was (or is)
- when you visited it
- what it looked like

And explain why you visited it.

Sample

The **fast pace** of modern life in the city can be too much for an **introvert** like myself and I sometimes really need some time to **retire into my shell** and have a little retreat. Fortunately, I found the perfect little place called “Secret garden” which I am going to share with you now.

“Secret garden” is a garden themed coffee shop located on the rooftop of a building in the center of Hanoi. The café is well-known for its floral and **botanical-inspired** design, which gives you a sense of peace and **tranquility** while being able to enjoy some cake and coffee at the same time.

I have become a frequent guest there and usually go on the weekend. My favorite activities in this coffee shop are reading books while listening to relaxing instrumental music, having a warm cup of tea with cookies or just simply sitting in the exterior garden and enjoying the view.

Despite being popular, the coffee shop’s still able to manage a quiet and soft atmosphere. The setting is perfect with relaxing music, and the staff are really well-trained and cater to the guests’ needs quite well. Also, other guests there are usually quite respectful and generally don’t disturb other people by talking or laughing too loudly.

It’s rare to find a place like this in Hanoi and I always recommend it to my friends who need a break from the busy city life.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Fast pace:** Nhịp độ nhanh
2. **Introvert:** Hướng nội
3. **Retire into my shell:** Thu mình
4. **Botanical-inspired design:** Thiết kế được truyền cảm hứng từ thực vật
5. **Tranquility:** Yên lặng, bình an

11. Describe a café you like or dislike

Describe a café you like or dislike

You should say:

- Where it was
- When you went there
- what you ate or drank

And explain why you liked or disliked the café.

Sample

The fast pace of modern life in the city can be too much for an introvert like myself and I sometimes desire some time to retire into my shell and take a little retreat. Fortunately, I found the perfect place called “Secret garden” which I am going to share with you right now.

“Secret garden” is a garden themed coffee shop located on the rooftop of a building in the center of Hanoi. The café is well-known for its floral and botanical-inspired design, which gives you a sense of peace and tranquility while enjoying some cake and coffee at the same time.

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12. Describe a lesson that you enjoyed

Describe a lesson that you enjoyed

You should say:

- When it was
- What it was about
- What happened

And explain why you liked it

Sample

Well, I would like to share with you about a really pleasant experience in an English class I had at my university. During one of our grammar lessons, the regular teacher was sick so the school had to send in a teacher to cover her place. And the substitute teacher, Thomas Hall, delivered an amazing lecture in English about how he thinks we should all learn languages through watching films.

Throughout the two hours, he explained to us the process of learning a language and how films can serve as an effective way to **immerse** yourself in a language. Basic elements like vocabulary and grammar can be easily absorbed if we focus on dialog in a TV show, and so in the long run, our overall language skills can be improved. This method helps us to learn any language effortlessly and in a short period of time.

At first, we were all **skeptical** about the ideas he introduced, however, after watching a short video to practice and doing a trial test, we were all convinced that learning by watching movies was not hard at all and we could apply this to enhance our performance at school.

I enjoyed this lesson so much because I find this method to be particularly effective for me. I always felt **unmotivated** when learning by traditional methods and my results were never desirable. But when I tried learning English using my favorite movies, you know what? My English got better and better and very soon I was able to remember thousands of new words and write really complicated essays. Now, I can even proudly say that I have mastered the English language.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Immerse oneself in something:** Đắm mình vào điều gì đó
2. **Skeptical:** Hoài nghi
3. **Unmotivated:** Không có động lực

13. Describe a leisure activity near or on the sea

Describe a leisure activity near or on the sea

You should say:

- What it is
- What you should prepare
- Why you have to prepare

And explain how you feel about it.

Sample

I would like to talk about one of my favourite activities on the beach, swimming. You know, I live in Hai Phong, a **coastal city** with **golden beaches** and the nearest seashore is just fifteen minutes from my house. So, in the summer, my friends and I often go there and swim in the cool water to avoid the hot weather.

Actually, swimming is a relatively easy sport. I learned how to swim when I was about 8 years old and it took me only a week to get familiar with a number of swimming strokes, like breaststroke, backstroke and butterfly. Before entering the water, I often **warm up** and **stretch my muscles and joints** to avoid any injuries, then put on my swimsuit and jump right in.

I really enjoy swimming on the beach because of a few reasons. Firstly, unlike other water sports such as diving or windsurfing, which require costly equipment, swimming costs nothing. Secondly, swimming is extremely beneficial to our health. It provides an **all-over body workout**, as nearly all of our muscles are used during swimming. It also **builds endurance, muscle strength and cardiovascular fitness**. Lastly, going swimming is a good means of recreation as it allows me to unwind, alleviate stress and have a great time with my friends.

Summer is coming so I'll definitely make a plan to visit the beach soon. I intend to go to Nha Trang beach as it's considered as one of the most magnificent beaches in the world.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **A coastal city:** Thành phố biển
2. **Golden beaches:** Bãi biển cát vàng
3. **Warm up and stretch my muscles and joints:** Khởi động cơ thể
4. **All-over body workout:** Hoạt động toàn cơ thể
5. **Build endurance, muscle strength and cardiovascular fitness:** Phát triển sự dẻo dai, sức mạnh cơ bắp và sức khỏe tim mạch

14. Describe a TV program you enjoy

Describe a TV program you enjoy

You should say:

- What it is
- When you watch it
- Who you watch it with

And explain why you like to watch it.

Sample

Well, I would like to talk about “The Walking Dead”, which is an American television drama series that I have recently become crazy about.

As you might not know, The Walking Dead is the most popular TV show **on air** right now and everybody across the globe watches it. It portrays the world after **a zombie apocalypse**, where society has crumbled and there is no government to take care of the people’s welfare.

The show **stars many talented and famous actors and actresses**. Among them, I believe Andrew Lincoln, who plays the leading role of a police officer, leaves the most significant impression on audiences and myself, mainly because of his outstanding acting skills and the devotion he put into every scene.

Interestingly enough, my favorite part about this show is the **make-up** of all the different zombies. You know, all the characters are well-designed and have to go through an elaborate makeup process to achieve extremely realistic looks on screen.

And the reason why I am a huge fan of The Walking Dead? Well, it is quite easy to explain. I’ve held a great interest in Zombie apocalypse’s ever since I was a kid and I even dreamt about living in one. Apart from that, I think that this series has **a very stimulating plot along with many unexpected twists**, which raises great excitement for the viewers.

I just simply cannot get enough of this show and I can’t wait for the beginning of the next season.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **On air:** Đang được phát sóng
2. **A zombie apocalypse:** Thảm họa xác sống
3. **Star many talented and famous actors and actresses:** Nhiều diễn viên tài năng đóng vai chính
4. **Make-up:** Trang điểm, hóa trang
5. **A very stimulating plot along with many unexpected twists:** Cốt truyện kích thích cùng với rất nhiều tình huống bất ngờ

15. Describe a service from a company or shop

Describe a service from a company or shop

You should say

- What the service was
- When and where you received the service
- Whom you were with

And explain how you feel about it

Sample

Hmn, this is indeed an interesting question. Well, regarding some excellent service that I received, I must say that I was really impressed by a company called Traveloka, which provided me with a booking service for flight tickets and a hotel reservation.

Last summer, my mother and I **made up our mind** to go on a trip to Taiwan. Previously, we would just simply book a package tour from a travel agent and they would take care of all the expenses and itinerary for us. However, this time both me and my mom wanted to do everything on our own, from booking the plane tickets to choosing the hotel and planning the trip.

Thanks to a friend's recommendation, I tried booking flight tickets online, from a website called Traveloka.com. This website is a product of the Traveloka company, which aims to provide a **user-friendly** platform for users to search and book flight tickets and hotel rooms.

At first I **held a lot of doubt** over this website since I had never bought plane tickets online before. However, after browsing through the site for a while, I was quite impressed by the sites' smartly designed layout and easy-to-follow content, and furthermore, it only took a few minutes to find the plane tickets that I wanted. Another good point to mention about the service was how quickly and convenient the payment was. They offered a variety of payment methods, such as credit card, bank transfer or direct debit, which would suit many different customers' needs.

Thanks to Traveloka, I managed to book the plane tickets at a reasonable price and **at lightning speed**. Both my mother and I were completely satisfied with the service that we received, and we gave the website a 5 star rating on the user review page. I would also recommend this site to other friends of mine.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Make up one's mind:** quyết định
2. **User-friendly:** dễ sử dụng
3. **Hold a lot of doubt:** Có nhiều nghi hoặc
4. **At lightning speed:** Nhanh như chớp

16. Describe an interesting conversation you had with someone

Describe an interesting conversation you had with someone

You should say

- who the person was
- where the conversation took place
- what you talked about

And explain why you found the conversation interesting.

Sample

I have to admit that I'm not much of a social person – I mean, I am quite shy and inhibited, so most of the time I tend to avoid talking to strangers. But I do remember a time when I had to talk to a complete stranger, and as I remember it was around 5 years ago, on my very first trip to Ho Chi Minh City. It was just a short conversation but I can still remember it quite well.

I was a 20-year-old freshman back then, and I was unable to navigate my way to the HCMC University of Education where I was about to start studying. Back then Google Map's wasn't as popular as it is nowadays, so the only way I could figure out the way was by asking a local. So after hours of wandering around, I finally resorted to asking a lady who was selling noodles at a food cart near where I was standing. I asked the lady if she would be so kind to tell me the way to the HCMC University of Education and she kindly replied by pointing to the big building across the road and saying 'it's over there'.

The university was being renovated back then, so I was unable to recognize it, but before I went off to study I decided to sit down and order some noodles from the old lady and have a chat with her. It turns out that she was also from Ninh Thuan, which is my hometown. So we ended up chatting for ages about our lives and about how and why we had come to HCMC.

You know, I think I found this conversation so interesting simply because I found Mrs Kim to be such a nice lady. As the conversation went on and I got to know her better I realized that she had had quite a tough life, yet she had managed to maintain such a sweet and gentle personality that many other women who have been through similar struggles to her would have lost by now.

17. Describe a change in your life

Describe a change in your life.

You should say:

- What the change was
- When it happened
- Why it happened

And explain how you have benefited from this change

Sample

I would like to talk about one of the greatest **transformations** in my life. I used to weigh around 65 kilos and after about 6 months of continuous dieting and working out, I successfully lost 15 kilos.

When I was a teenager, I mainly **subsisted on** fast food such as fried chicken, hamburgers or crisps. And with a number of high school exams I was often forced to stay up late and eat even more. As a result, I **put on weight** rapidly and one day, when I stepped on a scale, it read 65 kilos, and I knew that I had to start my weight-loss journey or I would become overweight.

After consulting my aunt, who worked as a nutritionist, I understood that losing weight was all about diet and exercise. Firstly, I cleaned out my fridge of all my favorite unhealthy foods, and began cooking **homemade meals**. I also drank at least 2 liters of water a day instead of soft drink. Secondly, I registered for a gym class and started to work out at least three times a week. And as well as this, I started going to bed early at night and waking up at 5 am to go biking every morning.

After 6 months of working out regularly and **resisting** junk food, my weight dropped to 50 kilos. However, it was not only about the weight loss, but also about the changes in my health. I felt stronger and happier than ever before. I rarely got sick and my skin also looked brighter. More importantly, I **regained my self-confidence**. I used to run and hide from cameras, but now I am much more comfortable being photographed. And the best thing is that I am now able to finally wear my old dresses and skinny jeans.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Transformation:** Sự biến đổi
2. **Subsist on:** Sống dựa vào
3. **Put on weight:** tăng cân
4. **Homemade meals:** Bữa ăn nấu tại nhà
5. **Regain self-confidence:** lấy lại sự tự tin

18. Describe a time when you worked in a team

Describe a time when you worked in a team

You should say:

- what the activity was
- who you worked with you
- how easy or difficult it was

And explain how you felt about being part of this team.

Sample

I'd like to talk about a team project that I was involved in during my "British and American culture" class at the Foreign Trade University in Hanoi. There were six of us on the team, and our task was to identify the differences in the travelling habits of British and American tourists. Our objective was to produce a report and give a presentation.

So the first thing we did was split into two groups of three. We had to **conduct a survey**, so three of us spent some time **designing a questionnaire** while the other three prepared an outline for the report. One of the difficulties we encountered was finding enough people for the survey because we needed 50 British and 50 Americans. But thanks to Facebook, we were able to reach enough people from those countries who were willing to help us out and fill in the online survey. In the end, I think it was a successful project because we were able to **figure out** the main travelling patterns of people from the US and the UK. Our group presentation also went really well.

It was really a memorable experience for all of us and I felt a real sense of accomplishment when we handed in our report and **delivered our presentation**. But what I was most proud of was how well our team worked together. There were still some minor tiffs between some of the team members, but overall I think each member showed a good level of responsibility and teamwork.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Conduct a survey:** Tổ chức một cuộc khảo sát
2. **Designing a questionnaire:** Thiết kế một bài khảo sát
3. **Figure out:** tìm ra
4. **A memorable experience:** một kỷ niệm đáng nhớ
5. **Deliver a presentation:** Có 1 bài thuyết trình
6. **A good level of responsibility and teamwork:** tinh thần đồng đội và trách nhiệm cao

19. Describe a piece of good news you heard

Describe a piece of good news you heard

You should say:

- what this news was
- when and where you heard it
- how you heard it

And explain why you think it was good news

Sample

I'm going to talk about the time when I received the official notification of my scholarship to join an exchange program in Japan about three years ago. It feels like a long time ago but I can still remember the day quite **vividly**.

At that time, I was a sophomore at university and one day I came across an advertisement for a two-month **cultural exchange program** in Japan for students from Southeast Asia. I was really eager to apply for this program and luckily my application was accepted and I was also **nominated** for a scholarship.

So about 2 months later, I received an email from the Scholarship Committee informing me that I had been chosen to receive a full scholarship which would cover all kinds of fees and living expenses for me during the program. I think **my heart skipped a beat** and I screamed out loud when I saw the word "Congratulations" in that email. I was really proud of myself to be chosen from hundreds of candidates to win this scholarship.

It was definitely the best news of the year. If I hadn't won the scholarship, my living expenses would have been such a heavy **financial burden** for my parents, but thanks to the generous grants that I received, I could really enjoy my time in Japan without worrying about the money. To this day I still keep this lucky email in my inbox to remind me of that special occasion.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Vividly:** một cách sinh động
2. **Cultural exchange program:** chương trình trao đổi văn hóa
3. **To be nominated for something:** Được đề cử cho cái gì
4. **My heart skipped a beat:** Cảm thấy rất phấn khích
5. **Financial burden:** Gánh nặng tài chính

20. Describe a trip you took by bike

Describe a trip you took by bike

You should say:

- When and where the trip was
- Who you went with
- Why you went by bike

And explain how you felt about it.

Sample

I would like to describe a really exciting tour that I went on last Saturday, which was a bicycle trip around Hoan Kiem Lake, also known as Sword Lake, which is one of the **major scenic spots** in Hanoi, the capital city of Vietnam.

I went on this trip with three **travelling companions**, who were all close friends of mine, and we agreed on riding our bicycles to the Ly Thai To statue at 5 am, which was our point of departure. I'm actually quite **an early riser** so I found it quite easy to get up that early and be there on time.

And luckily the weather that day was really nice. The air was fresh and the tranquility of the morning made me feel relaxed but energetic. We biked around the lake five times until about 7am when the sun began to rise and the streets started to get crowded. After that, we gathered at our favorite cafe to **sip on** cups of strong coffee and to chitchat.

I really enjoyed that bike trip due to several reasons. Firstly, it was a great chance for me to see our city from a very different perspective, a peaceful Hanoi without traffic jams and air pollution. I was able to **escape from the hustle and bustle of** the city for a few hours and refresh myself to get prepared for a new week.

I think that cycling is also a really great exercise that helps me to **strengthen my health, build up my stamina** and **improve the immune system**. And last but not least, I think this trip was a really great opportunity for me and my friends to get together and chat about our daily lives. You know, we are often too busy to meet regularly, so times like these are really valuable.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Major scenic spots:** những thắng cảnh lớn
2. **Travelling companions:** những người đi du lịch cùng nhau
3. **An early riser:** Người dậy sớm vào buổi sáng
4. **Sip on:** nhấp nhĩ
5. **Escape from the hustle and bustle of the city:** thoát khỏi sự bận rộn của thành phố
6. **Strengthen my health, build up my stamina and improve the immune system:** Cải thiện sức khỏe, sự dẻo dai và hệ miễn dịch

21. Describe a decision that you disagreed with

Describe a decision that you disagreed with

You should say:

- Who made this decision
- What it was
- How you told him/her

And explain why you disagreed with the decision

Sample

So today I am going to tell you about an important **milestone** in my life which was the first argument I had with my parents. Firstly let me explain why I took this experience so seriously. I'm usually a real **mama's boy** who always obeys my parents, especially my mom who is definitely the stricter of the two. She is so bossy and direct that it usually has to be **her way or the highway**. And also, my mother is awfully protective of me and never allows me to have or join in any **sleepover** whatsoever. And that leads to the main part of my story, which happened three weeks ago.

It was my best friend's birthday party and he invited me to sleep over at his house. I was so thrilled. I mean this was going to be my first sleepover. My excitement did not last long though as my mom immediately said no when I brought it up. Filled with anger, I found myself **raising my voice** at my mother for the first time in my life and said "Mom, I am a 21-year-old man. I can take care of myself". She was so surprised at my response and scolded me even harder. But I **stood my ground**. I believed it was about time I expressed my feelings and let her know how I felt. I felt that I was old enough to be responsible for myself and my mom needed to stop protecting me. Finally, she understood and let me go.

But I will never forget that day when I would go against my mother's decision and also the fact that I got super **wasted** that night and was grounded for the next two months.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Milestone:** Cột mốc
2. **Mama's boy:** Con cưng
3. **Her way or the highway:** Làm theo cách đó hoặc không làm (ý chỉ những người muốn người khác phải theo mình)
4. **Sleepover:** Ngủ qua đêm ở nhà khác
5. **Raise one's voice:** Nói lên tiếng nói của mình
6. **Stand my ground:** Khăng khăng không nhượng bộ
7. **Wasted:** Say khướt

22. Describe an enjoyable experience you had in the countryside

Describe an enjoyable experience you had in the countryside.

You should say:

- When and where you went
- Who you went with
- What you did there

And explain why you think it was enjoyable.

Sample

I would like to talk about last summer when I had an unforgettable opportunity to visit my hometown, which is a small village located in the north of Vietnam.

My entire family, including my parents, myself and my younger sister, decided to spend the day driving to the village. For my parents, this would be the chance for them to see their relatives who they hadn't seen in a long time. And for me and my sister, we hoped to get a closer insight into the life of the locals as well as strengthen our family bonds.

So, the four of us **hit the road** really early in the morning, at about 5 a.m. And after about 4 hours of driving, we arrived at a peaceful and tranquil village. To my astonishment the scenery was completely different from the neighborhood where I currently live. We admired the **brehtaking landscapes** of green paddy fields, winding paths and small houses standing next to each other. After that we went to visit our relatives who were really friendly and warm-hearted people and greeted us with great enthusiasm. The whole morning was spent talking and chatting about our lives and old memories. At noon, our family was treated to a **gourmet meal**, full of local and organically grown ingredients. In the afternoon, one of our relatives took us to see the paddy fields and the village's famous lake. My sister and I got to learn how to fish and feed the chickens, which was a novel experience since we had never done this before.

All of us were **over the moon** the whole day, which really was a once in a life time experience and would be embedded in our memory for a long time.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Hit the road:** Lên đường
2. **Breathtaking landscapes:** Phong cảnh đẹp tuyệt vời
3. **A gourmet meal:** Bữa ăn ngon và đắt tiền
4. **Over the moon:** Rất hạnh phúc

23. Describe a type of weather you like

Describe a type of weather you like

You should say:

- what kind of weather it is
- when this weather usually occurs
- what you usually do during this weather

And explain why you like this type of weather

Sample

I was born in Hanoi and have been living here for pretty much my whole life. Hanoi is known for all kinds of things, from street food to crazy rush hour traffic. And the city is also unique when it comes to how **fickle** the weather is. In the summer, the mornings can be so **scorching hot** that you won't want to leave your house or office, and then all of a sudden it'll be **raining cats and dogs** in the afternoon. Perhaps for someone who has spent more than 20 years living here, I somehow know the best time of year to go out and enjoy a picnic or go on a bicycle tour with your friends: and that's late autumn.

The weather during the last two weeks of October is just ideal for all kinds of activities. I mean, who doesn't love looking at a pure blue sky? Or who doesn't love having **a change of scenery** after a torturously hot Summer, instead, having a good time with your family in a gentle breeze? And people always say that during this time of year, Hanoi is the most beautiful.

This is also when I like to spend some quality time with my mom and dad and other people around me. We usually invite some neighbors around and have a barbecue out in the open. My dad has a very old cassette player, that he seems to be very proud of, maybe because no one in the neighbourhood has this kind of thing anymore, and he always brings it out during the barbecue and listens to some sport news with his friends while enjoying some beers. Other people turn on some music and sing along. It's just like a feast of a small Viking clan, and it is so fun to be a part of.

Living in a city where the weather can be so harsh and pretty much **unpredictable** all year round, I think having 2 weeks or so of perfect weather where I can have a truly joyous occasion with my family and neighbours isn't so bad.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Fickle**: Thay đổi liên tục
2. **Scorching hot**: Nóng như đổ lửa
3. **Rain cats and dogs**: Mưa rất to
4. **A change of scenery**: Thay đổi cảnh quan

5. **Unpredictable:** Không thể dự đoán được

ZIM

24. Describe an interesting talk or speech you heard

Describe an interesting talk or speech you heard

You should say:

- Who gave the talk/speech
- Where and when you heard it
- What it was about

And explain why it was interesting

Sample

Today I am going to talk to you about a speech that I **came across** two months ago on TV called “the power of vulnerability”.

The speech was delivered by Brene Brown who is an American **scholar**, an author and a public speaker. She has been involved in research on a range of topics, including vulnerability, courage, shame, and empathy.

I accidentally heard her speech when I was watching TV at home after a hard day at work. Her TED talk touched my spirit, **evoked my sympathy** and taught me many lessons. Firstly, I learnt that I cannot ignore all the negative feelings I have. If I try to avoid them, I won't be able to feel happy, grateful and joyful. Therefore, I need to **have the courage to face** and solve all the problems I have in order to live happily.

Secondly, thanks to this talk, I was able to understand how powerful it is to show other people my vulnerability, and that I should dare to **take risks** and do the things that I am not so sure about. For example, I should be the one who says I love you first, even if I know I might be rejected.

Finally, I learnt how to love myself **from the bottom of my heart** and was able to give up irresponsible behavior such as skipping meals or getting wasted whenever I was sad. And in addition to this, once I'm able to love myself, I won't hurt other people who truly love me.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Come across:** Gặp/nghe
2. **Scholar:** Học giả
3. **Evoke my sympathy:** Gợi lên sự thông cảm
4. **Have the courage to face:** Dũng cảm đối mặt với cái gì
5. **Take risk:** Liều
6. **From the bottom of my heart:** Từ tận đáy lòng

25. Describe an experience when you spent time with a child

Part 2: Describe an experience when you spent time with a child.

You should say:

- When you spent time with this child
- Who this child was
- What you did together

And how you felt about the experience.

Sample

So, I'd like to tell you about an experience when I spent time with a kid. It was when I was about 15 years old and I had to look after my brother's 2 year old son, who is my nephew. It was on a weekend one time when I was visiting my brother and his wife and their son. My brother's wife was **at work** that day and he had to go out to the shops to pick-up some groceries to cook for dinner, but instead of all of us go together, he decided that it would be much more convenient if he went alone and I stayed at home to look after my nephew while he was gone. At first I was a bit shocked that he came up with this idea because I had never looked after a small child on my own before and I was a bit nervous and didn't know what to do or what to expect, especially if something went wrong. But my brother reassured me that he would only be gone for about 30 minutes or so and that everything would be fine, and if I needed to **contact him in an emergency** then I should just **call him on his mobile phone**. So I **reluctantly** agreed.

Anyway, so my brother went off to the supermarket and I stayed at home with my nephew. At first I think I just put on one of his favorite cartoons on the TV to try and keep him occupied for a while, but this only worked for so long. After around 15 minutes, he got bored of that and wanted to do something else, so I then went and got all of his toys from his bedroom and brought them out into the lounge room and tipped them on the floor. We then made a big mess playing with his toys for about 10 mins before he quickly became bored again. So then after that I went to the kitchen and found some of his favorite snacks and we sat back down to watch cartoons again on the television and eat the snacks. After about 5 minutes though, thankfully he fell asleep until my brother arrived home. So, all in all, it was a fine experience I guess. I was quite **relieved** that nothing bad happened and I realized that it wasn't that difficult to look after small kids.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **At work:** Đi làm
2. **Contact him in an emergency:** Liên lạc khi có trường hợp khẩn cấp
3. **Call him on his mobile phone:** Gọi vào điện thoại di động
4. **Reluctantly:** Gượng ép
5. **Relieved:** Nhẹ nhỡm

26. Describe a piece of artwork that you have seen before

Describe a piece of artwork that you have seen before.

You should say:

- Where you saw it
- What it was about
- When you saw it

And explain how you felt about it

Sample

Today I would like to tell you about one of the most well-known paintings in the world, which is also my personal favorite, the **portrait** of Mona Lisa.

You know, the painting was created by Leonardo da Vinci, the famous Italian artist from the 15th century. When I first saw this painting in one of my high school textbooks, I just couldn't **take my eyes off it** due to some **mysterious attractiveness**.

At first sight, all I noticed in the painting was a long-haired woman with a friendly smile on her face, which was quite round, and she had no eyebrows either. The more I looked at it the more I felt like she was actually smiling at me.

Some people have claimed that Mona Lisa was simply **an imaginary character** while others have believed that she was actually Leonardo's wife. Honestly, it doesn't really matter to me though because I think that the Mona Lisa is a **masterpiece** that attracts people with that magical smile. This is also one of the main reasons why I am a fan of the painting.

In terms of the actual truths behind this portrait, I guess we may never know, but I think that secrets make everything all the more intriguing.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Portrait:** Chân dung
2. **Take one's eyes off something:** Rời mắt khỏi cái gì
3. **Mysterious attractiveness:** Sự thu hút bí ẩn
4. **An imaginary character:** Một nhân vật tưởng tượng
5. **A masterpiece:** Một tuyệt tác

27. Describe a useful website that you often visit

Describe a useful website that you often visit.

You should say:

- What the contents of this website are;
- How you first found this website;
- How often you visit this website;

And explain how this website helps you.

Sample

So, if there is anything that I miss about America, it would definitely be Netflix. I am really into TV series, you know, especially the DC comic series like the Flash, Green Arrow and Super-girl. Netflix is the world's leading internet television network but it's still unauthorized in Vietnam, so I found my first few months at home really quite **unbearable**.

Fortunately though, Minh, my good friend and **savior**, saved me from this dilemma by introducing me to an unbelievable website called newmovie.vn. So basically, the website's owners, who apparently are also real **movie buffs**, manage to get the hottest new shows from around the world and upload them **on a daily basis** for Vietnamese viewers for, if you can believe it, absolutely no charge whatsoever. Newmovie.vn possesses unlimited access to not only my favorite tv series' but also many other shows on my **movies-to-watch list** including things like Game of Thrones and Sherlock Homes. Since this discovery, I've become addicted to the website and am **a daily visitor**.

In conclusion, newmovie.vn is a real lifesaver and honestly, I don't think I could put up with all the stress and assignments in my life without my **daily movie dosage** from newmovie.com.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Unbearable**: không thể chịu được
2. **Savior**: Cứu tinh
3. **A movie buff**: Người nghiện phim
4. **On a daily basis**: Hàng ngày
5. **Movies-to-watch list**: Danh sách phim cần xem
6. **A daily visitor**: ám chỉ ngày nào cũng xem chương trình này
7. **Daily movie dosage**: Lượng phim xem hàng ngày

28. Describe one of your best friends

Describe one of your best friends

You should say:

- What this person looks like
- When and where you met this person
- What you do when you are together

And explain why he/she is one of your best friends

Sample

Well, the person I'd like to talk to you about is a very good friend of mine, Mai. She must be one of the nicest and most **down-to-earth** individuals I know.

If I were to describe how she looks I would say Mai is a very gorgeous and charming girl who always attracts a lot of attention from men. She is much taller than me so it's kinda embarrassing standing next to her to be honest. Mai also has straight brown hair and deep, dark brown eyes. Like most teenagers, she pays a lot of attention to her appearance and likes dressing in the latest and most **snazzy fashion**. I don't think I've ever seen her in a plain old T-shirt or jeans.

Anyway, we've basically known each other since forever because we were in the same class from high school through to college. You know, the first time I met her, she left a deep impression on me because on the first day at school, I got lost while trying to find my classroom and she was my savior. Coincidentally, we were arranged by the teacher to become desk-mates.

And with regards to why she became my bestie, well, I guess the main reason is that we really **hit it off** right from the start, and we also **see eye to eye** on a lot of things such as fashion, sport and even video games. She is my closest friend so I feel like we can share everything together, from schoolwork to our love lives. The thing I admire most about Mai is that she is really protective and likes to look after people.

As a normal human being, however, Mai also has her shortcomings. She's never on time, and is sometimes quite absent-minded and inconsiderate and that makes people think she never takes things seriously. But I don't think this is true. She has a strong sense of responsibility and I know that I can always rely on her. For me, friendship is the most important thing in the world and I am proud to say that I have such a loyal and helpful friend – she's really one in a million.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Down-to-earth**: Thân thiện
2. **Snazzy fashion**: thời trang thu hút

3. **Hit it off:** Dễ làm thân
4. **See eye to eye:** Đồng quan điểm

29. Describe a street you know well

Describe a street you know well

You should say:

- Where it is
- What the main buildings are
- How often you go there

And explain how you feel about this street

Sample

Well, there are quite a few streets that I could have chosen to talk about, but I'd have to say the one I most enjoy going to is Ly Thai To Street, which is one of the most popular tourist areas in Hanoi.

Regarding the location, the street is somewhere in the centre of the city, about fifteen to twenty minutes' drive from where I live. So I normally go there by scooter.

And as for how often I go there, well on average, I guess probably something like once or twice a month, which I know is not a lot, but unfortunately, I just don't have enough time to go there as often as I'd like to.

Anyway, most of the time I actually just go there for the street food, because there are loads of stalls which do really good food, like barbecued squid, bacon sandwiches, chicken wings and stuff like that. So that's basically what I mainly go there for. There's also quite a few little shops selling various souvenirs and handicrafts as well, but I don't spend much time in them because most of the things are pretty overpriced. For example, a pack of postcards will probably **set you back** about 30,000 dong or so, whereas if you went to any bookshop in the city, it would probably only cost about 10,000 dong.

But anyway, in terms of why I like this street, firstly, as I just mentioned, the food there is fantastic, and as well as that, I also like that fact that it's **pedestrianized**, so there's a lot of space to walk around without having to worry about getting hit by a car! And another thing worth mentioning is that most of the buildings are pretty old, so it gives the street a really nice, traditional feeling.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Set you back:** Tốn một khoản phí nào đó
2. **Pedestrianized:** Làm vỉa hè cho người đi bộ

30. Describe a time when you saw an interesting animal

Describe a time when you saw an interesting animal

You should say:

- What animal it was
- When and Where you saw it

And explain how you feel about this animal

Sample

Well, I'm going to talk about an occasion on which I got to see a group of small monkeys.

As we all know, monkeys are one of the funniest animals in nature. They are full of curiosity, adventure and **mischief**, and have great intelligence. They often live in the jungle, mostly in tropical rain forests, and jump from tree to tree to seek out food and play. The diet of a monkey includes nuts, berries, fruits, anything that smells good, and not to mention, bananas, which is always at the top of their list.

Anyway, back to the main point, the first time I saw a 'real' monkey was a long time ago, when I was in secondary school. My friends and I traveled to a mountain located somewhere on the outskirts of Hanoi, and when we were climbing the mountain, suddenly a group of small monkeys appeared in the middle of the road ahead in the distance. They were jumping up and down from trees before they approached us. Then the monkeys stared at me and my friends as though they wanted to communicate and ask for food, so I decided to give them some of our snacks. They were really cute creatures, you know, their hands are like a mini versions of ours, which makes them look like little kids.

However, although I'm quite into monkeys, I have to admit that they are unexpectedly **sneaky**. In some tourist attractions around Vietnam, you can easily spot a **troop** of monkeys stealing food from street vendors, and other unsuspecting tourists. Unfortunately, there's nothing we can do but watch them run off into the jungle with our food as they are way faster and smarter than you may think.

Anyway, the trip was truly a **once-in-a-life-time** experience for me as I got to touch and feed wild monkeys. Seeing them **first hand** also made me realize that they share more common features with humans than I'd previously thought, which really evoked my curiosity about the theory of how people evolved from apes over millions of years.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Mischief**: Nghịch ngợm
2. **Sneaky**: Lén lút
3. **A troop of monkeys**: Bầy khỉ
4. **Once in a life time**: Một lần trong đời

5. **First hand:** trực tiếp

ZIM

31. Describe a famous person that you are interested in

Describe a famous person that you are interested in

You should say:

- who this person is
- how you know about this person
- what sort of life they had before they became famous
- how this person became famous

And explain why you like this person

Sample

I am going to tell you about a well-known **physicist** whose biography recently really caught my attention. He is **a house-hold name** around the world, Albert Einstein.

He is recognized as the father of modern physics and he was the founder of the Theory of Relativity, which became an essential, if not the most important, contribution to modern science. He was also awarded the Nobel Physics prize thanks to this discovery.

Besides knowing him due to his many achievements, I did come across and read a **biography** of him on the internet which really intrigued me and contained a lot of information that made me admire him a lot. His childhood was not as **carefree** as I initially thought and I was totally impressed by his perseverance and dedication to science despite having **communication problems** at a very young age.

I love how Albert Einstein lived and worked with passion and enthusiasm all his life, which, I feel is a shining example and a great inspiration for me to follow. Albert was hunted by the Nazi's for most of his adult life, yet he never abandoned his love for science and kept working even when he was running to protect himself.

So, in other words, he really inspired me to pursue my goals and dreams with all I that I have, despite any difficulties that I come across along the way.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **A house-hold name:** Cái tên quen thuộc
2. **Biography:** Tiểu sử
3. **Carefree:** Vô tư
4. **Communication problem:** Vấn đề về giao tiếp

32. Describe an interesting neighbor you know

Describe an interesting neighbor you know.

You should say:

- Who this person is
- How you know this person
- What this person likes to do

And explain why you think this neighbor is interesting.

Sample

I must say, I am extremely fortunate to have such a wonderful neighbor, Duy, who is really friendly and always willing to assist me whenever I'm in trouble.

Duy and I live in the same building, and our apartments are next to each other. We came to know each other when the electricity to the entire building was **cut off** one evening. Unfortunately, I had run out of candles and the torch was nowhere to be found, so I had to go to the apartment next door for help, and this was when I first met my neighbor. He was extremely helpful and enthusiastic and he asked me to hold his torch while he lit the candles in his apartment. I was really **grateful for** his help and a few days later, I made some snacks for him as **a thank-you gift**. Since then, we have become quite close friends.

The more I got to know Duy, the more I began to look up to him. Even though he is well into his fifties and lives on his own, as he lost his family in a car accident, he still manages to **see life through rose coloured glasses**. His motto in life is "to keep moving forward". He works and studies at the same time, and on the weekends, he travels to an orphanage to teach maths to the kids there.

He really is a wonderful neighbor and I know I could call on him if I ever needed to. We will always help each other out when we can, and because we both live on our own, it's really important to have a good friend close by.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Cut off:** Cắt điện/nước
2. **Grateful for:** Biết ơn
3. **A thank-you gift:** Quà cảm ơn
4. **See life through a rose coloured glasses:** Nhìn đời với lăng kính màu hồng

33. Describe a family member that made you proud

Describe a family member that made you proud.

You should say:

- Who the person is
- How close you are
- What he/she did that made you proud

And explain why they made you proud.

Sample

There is no one else in this world I hold more respect for than my mother. She is my guardian, my friend and my role model.

My mother is well into her forties now, but she still manages to maintain a youthful appearance. In terms of her personality, she is an extremely compassionate, kind-hearted and attentive person who always takes care of her children. She is both a mother and a friend to me as she always gives me valuable advice and is always willing to be there for me during all of the ups and downs in my life. Although sometimes she drives me crazy, because she's such a perfectionist, I still hold a lot of pride and respect for her.

The reason that I am so proud of her is because she is such a strong-willed person. Ever since she was young, she had to learn to be independent as my grandparents were constantly busy and always on the go. She had to take care of almost everything, her younger brother, household chores and herself. Such challenges shaped her into the strong woman that she is now. Her independence has also been strengthened through all the hardship she has dealt with in her life. When she reached her thirties, she decided that she wanted to run her own business, a clothing store. All the members in our family tried to prevent her from doing this since we all thought it was a bad idea because she would have to face a lot of competition from other nearby shops.

But through her determination and perseverance she has managed to make a success out of her business and it really is something for us to look up to, and I keep reminding myself every day to try to be as strong as my mother, a real-life "wonder woman."

34. Describe two people from the same family

Describe two people from the same family

You should say:

- Who they are
- How you know them
- If they look a-like

And if you like spending time with them.

Sample

Today, I am going to talk about the twin sisters that live next-door to my apartment.

The twins moved into the apartment about one year ago with their parents. We came to know each other when the electricity in our building was cut off one evening and unfortunately, I had run out of candles and my torch was nowhere to be found. So I had to go to the apartment next door to ask for some candles, and this was when I first met them. They were extremely helpful and enthusiastic and they even let me stay at their place until the power was back on. I was really grateful for their help and a few days later, I made some snacks for them as a thank-you gift and invited them over to my place for a sleep-over. Since then, we have become really close friends.

Even though they are twins, they look nothing alike. The older one has a short, bob haircut and a real **mischievous grin**. A true **social butterfly**, I would say. Meanwhile, her younger sister always ties her long straight hair into a ponytail with a ribbon and always has **a very sheepish look** on her face and is a bit more shy and reserved. Despite the different vibes that each one has, they both are very mentally and physically attractive in their own unique ways.

Ever since the twins **came into my life**, sleepovers and **movie marathons** have become a regular activity every weekend, and the talk never gets boring because each of them has such a different personality. I hope my friendship with them lasts a lifetime.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Mischievous grin**: Cười đùa
2. **A social butterfly**: Người vui vẻ
3. **A sheepish look**: Giả nai
4. **Come into one's life**: Xuất hiện trong cuộc đời ai
5. **Movie marathons**: Dịp mà ai đó xem nhiều phim liên tục

35. Describe an important plant in your country

Describe an important plant in your country

You should say:

- What the plant is
- How you know it
- Why it is important

And explain how much you like the plant.

Sample

Well I'd love to talk about rice, the most important agricultural plant in my country.

Ever since I was in my early elementary years, the rice plant has appeared in almost every subject, from literature to natural science to geography. And even in real life, the rice plant can be spotted all across the countryside around Vietnam.

It never ceases to amaze me how such a simple plant could support a whole nation's economy. Up to this day, millions of Vietnamese families are still dependent on the cultivation of rice to **make ends meet**. And the fact that Vietnam has become one of the world's leading rice exporters is more solid proof of the relevance of this plant in my country. Besides this, rice has been an indispensable part of the main meal of most families for centuries and children practice the habit of eating rice from a very young age, and as for the older generation, they **cannot go a day without** rice in some form or the other.

Over thousands of years, the rice plant has played a really important role in Vietnamese culture and many traditions and ceremonies originate from the farmers' hopes for an **abundant crop**, and many of these traditions are considered as important established customs to foreign visitors.

I think that the rice plant has become one of the greatest symbols for the Vietnamese spirit and deserves large appreciation from all generations.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Never cease to amaze me:** Không ngừng làm tôi ngạc nhiên
2. **Make ends meet:** Trang trải cuộc sống
3. **Go a day without something:** Sống một ngày mà thiếu cái gì
4. **An abundant crop:** Mùa màng bội thu

36. Describe a foreign food you would like to try

Describe a foreign food you would like to try.

You should say:

- What it is
- Where you can eat it
- How you know about this food

And explain why you would like to try it

Sample

Today I would like to tell you about crepes, one of the most popular French street foods that I **have been longing to try**.

I first became interested in this food after learning about it through a TV program that I watched about a year ago on different cultures around the world. The show gave a really detailed description of how to prepare this dish, what ingredients are required, the different stuffings that can be used to make different types of crepes, and why this food is so closely related to French culture. I was watching with utmost interest and attention and immediately jumped onto my computer to do some more research about it after the show ended.

It's said that, walking around Paris you can locate **street stands** selling crepes everywhere and that this dish is a really tasty afternoon snack to indulge in before dinner without ruining your appetite. And even though it is not that hard to find a crepe shop in Hanoi, I believe the taste cannot be compared to the authentic recipe that only street stands or restaurants in France are capable of delivering.

Since watching this program, the idea of walking down the street in Paris while enjoying a delicious crepe has been on the top of my **wish list** ever since, and I've been saving up money recently hoping that I get to **fulfill this dream** sometime soon.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Have been longing to try something:** Mong mỗi được thử cái gì
2. **Street stands:** Quán ăn tiện lợi trên đường
3. **Wish list:** Danh sách những điều muốn làm
4. **Fulfill this dream:** Hoàn thành ước mơ này

37. Describe a crowded place

Describe a crowded place

You should say:

- Where it was
- When you went there
- What you did there

And explain how you felt about the crowded place.

Sample

I would like to talk about my recent trip to Ba Den pagoda, which was an experience that I always remember due to the massive number of visitors that I encountered while I was there.

So usually, during the Tet holiday, my family often drives to Tay Ninh province to visit my grandfather and last year we decided to take a short trip to Ba Den pagoda on Ba Den Mountain.

Before getting on the cable car to go up to the pagoda, I thought that maybe there might be a lot of Buddhist worshippers up there, as this **sacred** place tends to attract countless visitors all year round, **let alone** during Tet, which is the biggest holiday in Vietnam. And, I was right. There was people with flowers and candles everywhere. On one corner, lines of people were trying to light their **incense sticks**, and inside the pagoda many people were **kneeling** and praying with their eyes closed. It was pretty hard for us to even find any room to stand.

But, in the end, we successfully managed to find a way through the crowd and got close to the **worshipping place**, however my grandfather stayed outside as he can't stand all the smoke and lack of oxygen.

You know, although I understand that most Vietnamese people enjoy going to pagodas and temples during these special days of the year to wish for good luck, and well-being and happiness, I really don't think I'll be doing that again anytime soon.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Sacred:** Thiêng liêng
2. **Let alone:** chưa nói đến cái gì
3. **Incense sticks:** Hương
4. **Kneel:** Quỳ
5. **Worshipping place:** Nơi để thờ cúng

38. Describe a popular place

Describe a popular place

You should say:

- Where is this place?
- When did you first visit this place?
- How often do you go to this place?

And explain why it is so popular.

Sample

So, today I am going to talk about an outstanding swimming pool called, the Four Seasons, which attracts around a thousand people a day and many consider this to be the most popular pool in the city.

Four Seasons is an indoor public pool located in my local **sports complex**. The reason why the pool is called Four Seasons is because it's a heated pool and people can go there to enjoy the warm water all year round.

As you may know, swimming is now becoming quite a popular exercise and **recreational activity** for people of all ages in Hanoi, and I also took swimming lessons through my time at school. However, it was not until about a year ago that I started to pay regular visits to this pool, and all thanks to my best friend for introducing me to this wonderful place.

So, I think that Four Seasons is such a popular place for several reasons. Firstly, safety is their highest priority, and there's always a well-trained lifeguard there to instruct the pool safety rules and **perform any water rescues** if necessary. Secondly, the quality of the facilities is excellent. The pool is nicely heated and regularly **sanitized**. There are also clean changing rooms with showers and big lockers for all your clothes and other belongings, and I think that all of this creates the best experience for the people that go there to swim. I believe that the Four Seasons swimming pool totally deserves its great reputation.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Sports complex:** Tập hợp những cơ sở thể thao
2. **Recreational activity:** Hoạt động giải trí
3. **Perform any water rescue:** Cứu người
4. **Sanitized:** Khử trùng

39. Describe a newly-opened shop

Describe a newly-opened shop

You should say:

- Where the shop is
- When it opened
- What it sells and how you feel about the shop.

Sample

I am going to talk about a newly-opened **convenience store** in my neighborhood called Circle K. Actually, Circle K is an extremely popular **chain-store** from America and has multiple outlets around Hanoi now.

But the Circle K that I'm speaking about was recently built only a couple of blocks away from where I live and I noticed it as soon as it was built. Also, because of its **eye-catching** logo with a giant, red letter K in a white circle, it's quite hard to miss.

I think that the main reason that I became a regular customer of Circle K was because of one particular item that they sell in their stores, and I was **on cloud nine** when I discovered it, my favorite alcoholic drink, Vodka Cruiser. You know Cruiser's only contain 4.5% alcohol which is perfect for **a lightweight** like me. And so, after my discovery, Circle K pretty much became a regular **hangout spot** of mine where my buddies and I would sometimes meet up and sit outside the store with a couple of Cruiser's chatting about our lives and stuff. It's actually kind of embarrassing but Circle K is the place where I come to **let off some steam** after a break up or some other big drama I have in my life.

So yeah, as long as Circle K still keeps on selling Vodka Cruisers, it will always be my favorite shop.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Convenience store:** Cửa hàng tiện lợi
2. **Chain-store:** Chuỗi cửa hàng
3. **Eye-catching:** Bắt mắt
4. **On cloud nine:** Rất vui sướng
5. **A lightweight:** Người nhẹ cân
6. **Hangout spot:** Nơi tụ họp
7. **Let off some steam:** Giải trí

40. Describe a place you want to work

Describe a place where you want to work

You should say:

- where it is
- what kind of work you would like to do
- when you would like to work there

And explain why you want to work in this place.

Sample

Well, the place that I have always wanted to work but have yet had the chance to visit is Tokyo, the capital of city of Japan.

I have been dreaming to work in this city ever since I learned about it from a travel and lifestyle channel. And even though it is considered as a major **cosmopolitan** city, I'm always amazed at its ability to preserve the cultural aspect of Japan. The existence of such marvelous temples in the centre of the city, or the sight of Japanese women wearing kimonos just seems quite amazing to me. Apart from this, the city where I live, Hanoi, is currently suffering from a serious air pollution problem, so it would be a nice break to be able to find a job in one of the cleaner countries in the world.

Recently, there has been many agencies and organizations that help to assist undergraduates or newly-graduated students to find employment in Japan, and so if everything **goes according to plan**, in about 6 months I will start working as a Marketing intern for an English centre located in Ginza, which is one of the busiest streets in Tokyo. Fingers crossed that everything goes according to plan and I am able to **enter a completely new phase in my life**.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **A major cosmopolitan city:** Thành phố đa văn hóa
2. **Everything goes according to plan:** Mọi thứ đều diễn ra như kế hoạch
3. **Enter a completely new phase in my life:** Bước vào giai đoạn mới của cuộc đời

41. Describe a time you arrived early

Describe a time that you arrived early

You should say:

- When it was;
- How early you arrived;
- Why you arrived early;

And explain how you felt about it.

Sample

So last week I actually had to show up early for my friend's wedding party. And as her **bestie**, I think it's my responsibility to help her have the best wedding ever, so on her wedding day, I decided to **show up** early and help her with all the preparations. I think it was about 5am when I arrived at the front door of her house. Actually, I'm quite **the night owl**, so it was a little difficult for me to get up that early but once I saw the big smile on her face I was completely awake and got to work right away. So, the list of things-to-do was quite long, decorating the room with flowers, cleaning dishes, preparing the food, so I was really glad that I had decided to come early. By about 9am, after everything was thoroughly done, the wedding ceremony began in a very sincere and happy atmosphere.

Witnessing the bride and groom **exchanging vows** was quite emotional and I even **shed a tear** or two. I felt very happy for her that she'd finally found her **Mr. Right**. And after the wedding party, despite being exhausted, I was also quite relieved and delighted because I think my help was one of the factors that really made her day so special.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Bestie:** Bạn thân
2. **Show up:** Xuất hiện
3. **The night owl:** Người hay thức đêm
4. **Exchange vows:** Trao lời thề nguyện
5. **Shed a tear:** Khóc
6. **Mr. Right:** Người ấy

42. Describe an interesting event

Describe an interesting event

You should say

- What the event was
- How you knew about this event
- Why it was so interesting

And explain your feelings towards this event.

Sample

Well, the event that I want to share with you today is my best friend's wedding, which took place 3 weeks ago and left a deep impression on me. I received a phone call from her last month and she told me that she was going to be **tying the knot** soon, and to be honest, I had been waiting for this to happen for quite a long time since both **the bride and groom** are close friends of mine, and I know them quite well. And since they are such close friends of mine, I knew that I would have to take part in this special occasion **at all costs**.

So there were several things that made her wedding such a wonderful day. Firstly, I was quite impressed by the way the room was decorated with lots of lights, candles and roses, which really created a cozy and romantic atmosphere. Secondly, the wedding was held in quite a modern way, which I found really great as I had only previously been to more traditional kind of weddings before.

One of the moments that really surprised me though was when the groom got up and sang a song for the bride and all the guests sang along with him. Many people even got up to dance. He also played a video clip of himself that he had made where he expressed his love and appreciation for his bride, which was very **touching**, and I think I even shed a tear.

And the last thing I really enjoyed about being involved in the wedding was that it gave me the chance to meet many of my friends who I hadn't seen for a long time. We **made use of** this opportunity to take a lot of photos with one another and the **newly-weds**, of course.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Tie the knot:** Cưới ai đó
2. **The bride and groom:** Cô dâu chú rể
3. **At all costs:** Bằng mọi giá
4. **Touching:** Cảm động
5. **Make use of something:** Tận dụng cái gì
6. **Newly-weds:** cặp đôi mới cưới

43. Describe a plan

Describe a plan

You should say:

- What the plan is/was
- When you thought of the plan
- Who is involved in the plan

And say how you did/think you will achieve the plan

Sample

Well I just turned 18 this year, so apparently it is time for me to plan something special for the future. There are many things that I could do, but one of the plans that I find the most intriguing is to go travelling to Singapore.

I came up with this plan after I had finished my university entrance exam in June, and three of my best friends have decided to come with me. So we kind of feel that after 12 years of hard work and constant studying that taking a break is really essential. I think we all decided on Singapore because it's such a modern city with such a clean environment, and not to mention the fact that it's so close to Vietnam, it's just a short flight. Technically we're all just barely adults so it might take some time to persuade our parents to allow us to go on this trip together though.

First of all, we decided that it is vital to choose a tour, because going on a tour will make our parents feel more secure. It might be quite boring though due to the lack of **spontaneous** activities, but it seems like it's the best option to persuade our parents. Another thing to consider is the price of the tour. If it's too expensive, I'm afraid our parents will not let us go either, so choosing an affordable tour is **a must**.

Apparently, we must book our plane tickets in advance too, not only to get the cheapest price but also so that we are more well-prepared. When we reach Singapore, I think we will be polite tourists, listen carefully to the tour guide and avoid doing anything illegal. So that's our great plan to achieve a much-needed vacation.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Spontaneous:** Theo hứng
2. **A must:** Điều phải làm

44. Describe a special trip in the near future

Describe a special trip in the near future

You should say:

- When it will possibly be
- Where you would go
- What preparation you need for the trip

And explain why this would be a special trip

Sample

Traveling is what I enjoy the most in life and I've now visited most of the famous places in Vietnam. However, most of my trips were always with my friends, so now I really want to do something different and take my parents on a very special trip to visit Thien Cam beach.

We will probably take this trip next June I think. At that time of year, there won't be any school for me so things will be much easier to plan. My parents are also very excited about the trip and are really **looking forward to it**.

Thien Cam is the largest beach in Vietnam and is quite a popular **tourist destination**, famous for its big waves. It is located in the central part of the country, which is not really too far from where we currently live. When we arrive, aside from enjoying the beach, we will probably visit some other tourist attractions around the area, and I guess that during the trip we will probably get some souvenirs for our relatives as well.

In terms of the preparation, we are planning to go there by train so that we can enjoy the **scenic beauty** of our country along the way. Of course we'll probably have to **book a hotel in advance**, and bring our swimsuits, sunscreen and summer clothes. Another important thing to remember to bring is medicines, just in case someone gets sick.

So, the main reason this will be a special trip I guess is because my parents will be with me and this will be the first time they visit this place. Having my parents there with me will really make it special because it's been more than 7 years since we took a holiday together.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Look forward to something:** Mong chờ điều gì đó
2. **A popular tourist destination:** Điểm đến du lịch nổi tiếng
3. **Scenic beauty:** Vẻ đẹp phong cảnh
4. **Book a hotel in advance:** Đặt trước phòng khách sạn

ZIM

45. Describe a kind of music or a song

Describe a kind of music or a song

You should say:

- What kind of music it is
- Where you usually listen to it
- Why you like it

And say what kind of mood this music puts you in

Sample

I like to think of myself as a lover of music that is kind of **sentimental** and romantic. I love to listen to many different **music genres**, but the one that I particularly enjoy the most is Ballads. It is the genre that consists of slow tempo, sad vibes and heart-breaking lyrics.

I usually listen to these kinds of song on my computer or on my MP3 player with my headphones on, so you can basically see me listening to Ballads pretty much all of the time, and just about anywhere. I am quite a sensitive guy, so whenever I feel sad, I just turn on my MP3 player and let the melody express my feelings.

Ballads give me **a sense of nostalgia**, and make me remember about wonderful memories from the past with special people. Every time a Ballad is played, I remember my childhood, the sweet memories and the reckless moments I had with my friends, my ex-lovers and my family. This genre is the key that opens up the door to my past. I love it with all of my heart.

This music puts me in a sad yet charming mood. I feel sad that the past days are gone and yet I wonder about the future moments I'll have with special people. Furthermore, if I fall asleep while listening to a Ballad, I can dream of those memories and feel slightly happy when I wake up. It really has everything that I seek for when it comes to a music genre.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Sentimental:** Giàu tình cảm
2. **Music genres:** Dòng nhạc
3. **A sense of nostalgia:** Cảm giác nhớ nhung

46. Describe a time when you were not allowed to use your cellphone

Describe a time when you were not allowed to use your cellphone

You should say:

- Where you were
- When it happened
- What you were doing

And why you were not allowed to use your cellphone

Sample

Well, I think that mobile phones have now become the must-have item for everybody in daily life, so much so that we somehow feel we can't live without them. I always remember the one time that I had to be apart from my phone when I was sitting my high school graduation exam 2 years ago, and I have to say it was quite uncomfortable.

So, my high school graduation exam is a mandatory examination that students have to take at the end of grade 12 to get their diploma and their score is what determines their ability to enter university. It's one of the most important events in a students' life, I guess, because it not only pretty much **shapes their future** but also helps to **reassure their value** in themselves.

And of course, cell phones are not allowed in the test, to ensure that no one gets an unfair advantage by cheating. If your phone makes a noise, or if you are seen using it at any time, including during breaks, you may be dismissed from the examination immediately, and your scores will be forfeited without exception.

I myself had a bad habit of always going on the internet on my phone to make sure I got the right answers when doing the practice tests at home, so during the exam, I constantly had **a burning desire** to reach for my phone but obviously it was just a thought and I didn't dare to do it. However the feelings of uncertainty about my results were haunting me and made me really nervous, and it wasn't until I handed in my papers and checked the answers when I got home, was I able to feel calm again.

From this experience, I realized that I do rely too much on my phone. And although it's a great tool to assist studying I do think we should learn how to be more confident in ourselves and our knowledge without having to look at our phones all the time.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Shape their future:** Định hình tương lai của họ
2. **Reassure their value:** Khẳng định lại giá trị
3. **A burning desire:** Khao khát cháy bỏng

47. Describe a TV series you enjoy watching

Describe a TV series you enjoy watching

You should say:

- What it is
- What it's about
- When you first watched it

And explain why you like watching it

Sample

Well, I would like to talk about The Walking Dead, which is an American television drama series I have recently become crazy about.

As you might know, The Walking Dead is the most popular TV show on air at the moment and everybody across the globe is watching it. It portrays the world after a zombie apocalypse, where society has crumbled and there is no government anymore to take care of the people's welfare. I first watched this series about 3 years ago and I immediately fell in love with it, and since then I've become really fond of horror movies as well.

The show stars many talented and famous actors, which is one of the main reasons why I love this series. Andrew Lincoln is the actor who plays the leading role of a police officer and I think he leaves the most significant impression on the audience and me, mainly because of his outstanding acting skills and the devotion he puts into every scene.

Interestingly enough, my favorite part about this show is the make-up of the various kinds of zombies, with each and every one of them having to go through an elaborate makeup process to achieve the extremely realistic looks they are able to get.

So as I was saying earlier, I really have had a great interest in the idea of a Zombie apocalypse ever since I was a kid and I even dreamt of living in one once. But apart from that though, I think that this series has a very stimulating plot and many unexpected twists which raise great suspense and excitement for viewers.

I just simply cannot get enough of this show and I can't wait for the opening of the next season.

48. Describe an interesting advertisement

Describe an interesting advertisement

You should say:

- Where you saw it
- What it's about
- Why you think it was an interesting advertisement

Sample

So I'm going to talk about an advertisement for Blue Electronics, which is one of the biggest electronic brands in Vietnam. I've seen its advertisements everywhere, on TV commercials and even on social media networks like Facebook and Instagram.

The advertisement shows a video of people dressed as blue household appliances, smiling and staring creepily at the screen and dancing spontaneously to a really annoying yet catchy tune.

I think the aim of this ad is to create a big impression on the audience and to make the products seem more **appealing** to them. I also think they are trying to **traumatize** the audience so that whenever they hear that tune, they will think of Blue Electronics.

I think the advert is interesting because the company is deliberately trying to influence and attract people's attention, and they do this by trying to present the household appliances as something special, and kind of like a useful friend for everyone I guess.

I think older people will probably not enjoy these kinds of advertisements because older people usually prefer more informative, serious kind of ads, whereas the younger generation seems to be more crazy about this kind of advertisement, as I think they seem to be more open and able to perceive more innovative and hilarious ideas.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Appealing:** Thu hút
2. **Traumatize:** Ảnh hưởng

49. Describe someone you admire who is much older than you

Describe someone you admire who is much older than you

You should say:

- who this person is
- how long you have known him/ her
- what qualities he/ she has

And say why you admire him/ her.

Sample

Well, the first person who came to my mind is my grandmother. She is almost in her 80s and she has always been a major influence on me.

I guess I could say that I've known my grandmother my whole life because she was actually there the day I was born, and after the death of my grandfather she started to live in our house, so I was lucky enough to grow up and pass my adolescent years with her love and affection.

Since my childhood, she has always cared and loved me with all of her heart, and she is a really kind and wise woman which is why I always **turn to her for advice**. I think she's a compassionate person with a big heart, and always tries to help others whenever she can, and I can recall many occasions when she took great risks to help other people out.

She's also a successful mother of four children, one of whom is my father. She has devoted her entire life for the betterment of her kids, educating and guiding them to become good people. She possesses a very charming personality and always pleases everyone around her. Even a stranger can feel the warmth of her heart within only a short time.

I could really talk about her all day long because I love and admire her for many reasons. But I must say, the most important reason is her unconditional love for me. She is a great mentor who always shows me the positive side of things and guides me through my hardest times. Talking to her is **a soothing experience** and the stories she tells are always informative and full of important lessons and **morals**. I think she has had a great influence on my attitude in life and on my personality, and for all these reasons there's a strong bond between us, and I admire her very much.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Turn to somebody for advice:** Xin lời khuyên từ ai
2. **A soothing experience:** một trải nghiệm êm ái
3. **Morals:** Đạo đức

50. Describe a person who has apologized to you

Describe a person who has apologized to you

You should say:

- when it was
- who the person was
- why this person apologized

and explain how you felt about it.

Sample

Well I think that we all tend to make some mistakes in life now and then, sometimes intentionally, and sometimes unintentionally, but we usually regret them afterwards. I always try to apologize for what I do wrong, and of course, I expect the same from others.

So last month, my friend borrowed my car for the day and he knows very well that I'm very possessive about my car. I asked him to take good care of it as I know he is not a very good driver, and in fact, this is the reason why his father doesn't buy him his own car.

But he promised me to drive it very cautiously and safely, however when he returned it in the evening he sounded very low and he told me that someone hit the car from the rear when he was stuck in a traffic jam, and that caused him to hit the car in front of him. He was **feeling very guilty** for not taking care of the car and he apologized repeatedly for his **negligence**, and he assured me that he would get it repaired the first thing the next morning.

I did feel sorry for him though, but at the same time very sad as my car was damaged, but somewhere in my mind I knew that this was not his fault. Normally, I easily **lose my temper** but it was because of his sincere apology that I couldn't stay mad at him for very long.

So the next day, he went with me to the mechanic and luckily the damage was not so bad or expensive to fix. He apologized again and assured me that he'd be more vigilant in the future. We are still good friends and I feel that receiving an apology and forgiving someone is the best way to maintain and make relationships stronger.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Feel guilty:** cảm thấy tội lỗi
2. **Negligence:** Sự lơ đãng
3. **Lose one's temper:** Nổi giận

51. Describe a dinner you enjoyed with your friends

Describe a dinner you enjoyed with your friends.

You should say:

- when and where you had the dinner
- what you had
- who you went with

and explain why you enjoyed the dinner.

Sample

I have had many meals and taken part in many celebrations and parties over the years but among these, there's one particular time that I remember the most. A few months ago, I went to a barbeque party on the rooftop of one of my friends' homes. It was actually a **farewell party** for my best friend since she was going to study abroad, and the meal and the party were both really fantastic.

We had been planning this party for a long time and so on the day, we gathered at my friend's house and all went shopping and prepared everything together. We had a lot of amazing food that night as my best friend has a real **talent for** cooking. Thanks to her secret recipe, all the meat was marinated and seasoned perfectly and the taste was simply delicious. Besides the main dishes, a lot of drinks and snacks were served too. I myself enjoyed the dessert the most. It was a fluffy red velvet cake with a classic cream cheese frosting. We bought that from a famous bakery in Hanoi and it was **worth every penny**.

So we ate the grilled meat, drank beer and chatted the whole evening. During the dinner, we talked about our future, our funniest memories together and everybody had **a real blast**. There's no doubt that it could be quite a long time until we can all gather like that again, so that party is very memorable to me.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **A farewell party:** Tiệc chia tay
2. **Have a talent for something/doing something:** Có tài trong việc làm gì đó
3. **Worth every penny:** Đáng đồng tiền
4. **A real blast:** Rất ấn tượng

52. Describe a time when you had to work hard to achieve a goal

Describe a time when you had to work hard to achieve a goal

You should say:

- what the goal was
- when this happened
- what you did to achieve this goal

and explain why the goal was important to you.

Sample

I'm the type of person who never likes to **rely on luck**. I believe that everything can only be achieved through hard work and determination, and my final year in high school was one of the times that I **spared no effort** to achieve my goal.

At that point, I was still a senior student and like all the other students, passing the University entrance exam to get into my dream University was my main goal. But for me, I felt that the pressure was even higher since I had chosen Hanoi Medical University – one of the top Universities in Vietnam. There are thousands of students taking part in that exam every year so it is highly competitive.

In order to compete with the other candidates, every day I would spend hours in the library to read as many books as possible and to learn as much as I could. And even after school, I usually stayed up late to review everything I had learnt that day. It was a long process with a lot of hard work but I didn't feel tired at all because becoming a doctor was one of my greatest desires. I was willing to put in a lot of hard work and effort for that dream and to not let anything stop me from achieving it.

So in the end, all the **hard work paid off**, and I passed the entrance exam with outstanding results and became a medical student. When I received the results, I was so happy that I **burst into tears**. All of my hard work for the year had helped me achieve one of my big goals in life so far.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Rely on luck:** Phụ thuộc vào may mắn
2. **Spare no effort to do something:** Làm việc rất chăm chỉ để đạt điều gì đó
3. **Hard work pays off:** Chăm chỉ sẽ được đền đáp xứng đáng
4. **Burst into tears:** Khóc nức nở

53. Describe a holiday or vacation you have been on

Describe a holiday or vacation you have been on

You should say:

- when you had it
- where you went
- what you did

and explain how you felt about it

Sample

A few months ago, I went to the South of Vietnam for a vacation with my family. It's was to the lovely coastal city of Nha Trang, which is also a very famous tourist destination. We decided to go there by plane since it is nearly 1200 kilometers from Hanoi, and would take a long time by car or train.

I was so eager for the trip that I prepared everything such as my clothes, camera and other accessories a week in advance. It took about an hour to fly there, and luckily, the flight took off on time. The trip began with an incredible view from the airplane window and I can still remember being quite overwhelmed by the beauty of my city from above and the amazing sunset.

The time we spent in Nha Trang was a blast. We got to try out so many new things such as skydiving, surfing, and diving to see the coral reef. This place has one of the most beautiful beaches in Vietnam with deep blue water and pearly-white sand. Also, the food there was so unique and delicious. I think the most memorable moment of that trip though was definitely when we bought fresh ingredients from a local market and grilled them by the beach. Sitting there by the fire on a breezy night with the delicious smell freshly barbequed fish was an amazing experience.

The trip to Nha Trang really was the holiday of a lifetime. We had a lot of fun and got to see a lot of spectacular scenery. We definitely enjoyed it and we will definitely go there again if we have a chance.

54. Describe a happy family event that you remember well

Describe a happy family event that you remember well

You should say:

- what the event was
- when and where it happened
- What you saw or did

and explain why you remember this event so well.

Sample

Well, this is a very nice topic for me and I would love to talk about one of my most memorable childhood events that I had with my family. The celebration was to welcome a new member to our family, the birth of my nephew. My eldest sister gave birth to a beautiful and healthy baby boy and he was the first grandchild of my parents.

After seeing the newborn baby for the first time, my father declared that this was a really special occasion and that we must celebrate to welcome the newest member into our family. So we all got to work straight away organizing and planning for the party, my parents set out to invite all the guests and do the necessary shopping while my grandmother and sister cooked a lot of delicious food.

I was so happy and excited that when the gorgeous baby arrived, I didn't leave his side. I wanted to be near him and play with him all the time but he was still so small that he couldn't play with any of the toys I had given him. But it didn't really matter because I could just stare at his cute face all day long anyway.

It really was a day full of happiness, amazement and celebration. The arrival of a beautiful baby into the family had brought us all together. Many friends and relatives turned up for the occasion, and it was definitely a very happy event for our whole family, close friends and relatives.

55. Describe a long journey you traveled by car

Describe a long journey you traveled by car

You should say:

- what it was
- when and where it happened
- who is involved

and explain why it was happy.

Sample

I would like to describe quite a long but exciting journey that I went on last week by car from my hometown, Hue city, to the capital city, Hanoi.

I had three travelling companions in the car with me, who were three of my close friends and we had agreed on gathering at my house at 5am, which was our point of departure. Actually, I'm quite an early riser, so I found it quite easy to get up that early and be ready on time. And luckily, the weather that day was really nice, so we were able to leave the windows down for most of the trip. The fresh air and tranquillity of the countryside made me feel really relaxed but energetic at the same time.

After driving all day, we arrived in Hanoi quite late, by around 6:30pm and continued to drive around the lake a few times, until about 7pm, when the sun began to set and the streets became a little quieter. After that, we stopped at our favorite cafe to sip on some coffee and reflect on our long day.

I really enjoyed that car trip because of several reasons. To begin with, it was a great chance for me to see my country from a very different angle, a road trip with my mates. Usually I would take the train or a plane to complete that journey. So this was a great way to see things, stopping whenever we liked, if we saw something that interested us, for example. This car trip also helped me to refresh my mind by just hitting the open road and leaving all my worries behind. It was also a really great opportunity for me and my friends to enjoy each other's company and exchange stories along the way from our daily lives. You know, we are often too busy to meet regularly, so chances like this are really valuable.

56. Describe a short trip that was special to you

Describe a short trip that was special to you

You should say:

- when it was
- where you went
- who you went with

and explain why it was special.

Sample

I would like to describe a short but rather exciting tour that I went on last Saturday, which was a bicycle trip around Hoan Kiem Lake, which is also known as Sword Lake, and is one of the major scenic spots in Hanoi, the capital city of Vietnam.

I went on this trip with three close friends of mine, and we agreed on riding our bicycles to the Ly Thai To statue at 5am, which was to be our point of departure. I'm actually quite the early riser so I found it pretty easy to get up that early and be there on time.

And luckily the weather that day was really nice. The air was fresh and the tranquility of the morning made me feel relaxed but also energetic. We biked around the lake about five times until around 7am when the sun began to rise and the streets started to get crowded. After that, we gathered at our favorite cafe to sip on some coffee chat about our lives.

I really enjoyed that short bike trip due to several reasons. Firstly, it was a great chance for me to see our city from a very different perspective, a peaceful Hanoi without traffic jams and air pollution. I was able to escape from the hustle and bustle of the city for a few hours and recharge myself to get prepared for a new week.

I think that cycling is also a really great exercise that helps me to strengthen my health, build up stamina and improve my immune system. And last but not least, I think this trip was a really great opportunity for me and my friends to get together and chat about our daily lives. You know, we are often too busy to meet regularly, so times like these are really valuable.

57. Describe an environmental law

Describe an environment law

You should say:

- what it is
- how you first learned about it
- who benefits from it

And explain how you feel about this law

Sample

I would like to talk about a policy which the government put in place a long time ago, and I believe that has had a tremendously positive effect on the daily life of Vietnamese people.

I don't remember the exact official title of the regulation, but generally, it states that people must separate their household waste into three groups: organic, inorganic and recyclable materials, each of which has been assigned a different colored bin. To effectively make this rule work, the government has had to install thousands of different coloured bins throughout the city's public areas.

In the past, waste disposal was such a **daunting task** for the local government to deal with because most people had very little **environmental awareness**, and they often just mixed their trash into one giant mess, dumping it into rivers, on the streets or in any public place they felt like. This became quite an alarming situation in Vietnam for a number of years and had an extremely detrimental impact on the environment, and **not to mention** the mess it was creating in many urban areas.

So, by introducing this new law and by effectively campaigning it, a clear shift has occurred in people's daily lives, as now there is an effective and practical solution to **get rid of everyday waste**, and people's awareness around this issue has now significantly increased over the years. I'm really quite happy with how this law has helped to solve the waste problem in my country, rather than only the ineffective talk about the problem that was happening beforehand.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **A daunting task:** Công việc chán nản
2. **Environmental awareness:** Ý thức bảo vệ môi trường
3. **An alarming situation:** Tình hình đáng báo động
4. **Not to mention:** chưa nhắc đến điều gì
5. **Get rid of something:** Loại bỏ cái gì

58. Describe a recent happy event

Describe a recent happy event

You should say:

- what it was
- when and where it happened
- who is involved

And explain why it was happy.

Sample

I would like to talk about a special wedding that I recently attended, which was my brother's wedding, which is possibly one of the happiest events in my entire life.

It was only 2 months ago and I still remember that day rather clearly. My brother, who is my only sibling, decided to get married in the summer of 2017. And since my brother's **fiancée** is a Catholic, the wedding was a combination of both catholic and traditional Vietnamese style. Because we were on the groom's side, my family and I had to wake up early to follow my brother to his bride's house. There my brother would ask for permission from his future **parents-in-law** to allow him to take their daughter to her new family. After getting the acceptance, both the bride and groom and all the guests headed to a fancy restaurant, where the wedding ceremony was celebrated. I remembered how well the entire room was decorated with sparkling light bulbs and purple ribbons, which was the bride's favorite color. During the whole ceremony, myself and other guests witnessed the bride and groom exchanging vows with each other and this was indeed an unforgettable moment.

Also, this marriage was special for me in another sense, being that it was the first wedding I had had the chance to be a part of, which really made the whole event a once-in-a-life-time experience. It was really great to be able to see and feel the passionate love the couple had for each other, through the way they looked at each other and the through the way they expressed their vows. And finally, the wedding was carried out with a smooth and peaceful atmosphere and I think that all the guests really had a great time attending this sacred occasion.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Fiancée:** Vợ sắp cưới
2. **Parents-in-law:** Bố mẹ vợ

59. Describe a long walk you had

Describe a long walk you had

You should say:

- where you went to
- when you went
- who you went with

And explain how you felt about this walk.

Sample

I would like to talk about a long walk that I have taken recently. So this was a walk around Hoan Kiem Lake. I do this walk quite regularly actually, usually in the late evening, and usually whenever I am feeling **under pressure** at work or school.

That night, the fresh air and tranquil atmosphere around the lake made me feel relaxed but quite energetic at the same time, and it helped me to refresh my mind to get ready for a new day to come. There's also a lot of **police presence** around the area which makes you feel quite safe, so you don't have to be concerned about being **pick-pocketed** or something like that, you can really just concentrate your mind on other more important things.

Surrounding the lake is a long spacious pavement, where people usually go jogging and walking, and after taking a long walk I just sat there on a bench, taking in the peaceful atmosphere. Most of the time I was just gazing at the stars, trying my best to let my mind unwind and **meditate**.

The reason I took this walk was because I had just had a huge fight with my best friend and he had started questioning some things about my life, and it made me feel really awful. So following that, we had an argument and all of a sudden I started questioning our relationship. Things just started feeling very **bizarre**, so I went looking for something that would calm my mind.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Under pressure:** Bị áp lực
2. **Police presence:** Sự xuất hiện của cảnh sát
3. **To be pick-pocketed:** Bị móc túi
4. **Meditate:** Thiền
5. **Bizarre:** Kỳ cục

60. Describe a situation when someone made noise

Describe a situation when someone made noise

You should say:

- when it happened
- who made the noise
- where it was

And explain how you felt about it.

Sample

So I'm going to talk about the time when my neighbor made a lot of noise when he renovated his house a few months ago. The noise of the drills, hammers and other power tools during the daytime was really annoying.

I heard that a newcomer had bought the house next to mine and because of some problems with water leakage; he had made up his mind to do some repairs and renovations to the house, and after that, the noise of hammers, saws, and drills seemed to be endless around my house all day long, even on the weekends. My neighbor wanted to live in his house as soon as possible so he would start the work early every morning, and that made my family members and I wake up earlier than usual.

During this time I felt extremely exhausted and I really wanted to make a complaint so that my neighbor would take some actions but his house renovations were legal so there was nothing I could do. Hearing the noise all the time drove me crazy, and had quite a negative impact on my work.

Sometimes I was sleepless all night. But luckily, after about a month or so, my neighbor finished the renovations and the terrible construction noises ceased. I felt really relieved!

61. Describe a difficult choice that you made

Describe a difficult choice that you made.

You should say:

- what the choice was
- when this happened
- what choice you made

And explain why the choice was a difficult one.

Sample

So I'm going to talk about a situation when I found it really difficult to make up my mind. It was when I was a child, about ten years ago, and my parents weren't getting on well with each other, which made the atmosphere at home really terrible. In the end, they got divorced, but I didn't know whom I should go to live with, my mom or my dad.

That was a really difficult time in life for me because so many things changed, mostly in a negative way. I had a difficult time to choose who to live with because I loved both of my parents and we had had many unforgettable memories together. So to solve this matter, our family spent a long time discussing it and deciding on the best option for me.

Finally, I chose to stay with my mom because she could take better care of me and she needed my support after the divorce. Though my dad felt upset, he agreed with my choice, for my sake. You know, I believe that was not only a tough choice for me but also for my parents as well.

I always want to live under the same roof as both my parents, so choosing just one person to live with was a hard thing for me. Not being able to see my dad every day made me feel very sad, so that was one of the toughest choices I have ever had to make.

62. Describe what you would do if you were given a day off

Describe what you would do if you were given a day off

You should say:

- what you would like to do
- who you would like to be with
- where you would like to do it

And explain how you would feel at the end of the day.

Sample

So I'm going to share with you an activity that I would love to do if I had a day off; and that is to spend my entire day participating in various outdoor activities, in order to **relieve some stress** and **recharge my batteries**. I have been making some plans of a number of things that I'd like to do when I get the chance, such as hiking or cycling in a mountainous area, and paying a visit to some historical places.

So, if I had a day off, I would like to spend it with my best friend, Lan. She loves travelling and discovering new places as well, and she knows **basic first aid** and how to survive if we were to ever get lost, so I think that she would be the perfect partner to go with.

Ninh Binh province is my hometown so I would like to go there on my free day, and although I was born and brought up there, I haven't finished travelling through this massive mountainous province. Having numerous tourist attractions, Ninh Binh would enable me and my friend to enjoy the fresh atmosphere, go hiking and visit various places, for example, the Stone Church and Hoa Lu Palace.

I've been suffering from quite a heavy workload in my job recently, so **I'm really in need of** a day off that would allow me some time to do my favorite activities, making me feel more excited and happier with my life.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Relieve some stress:** Giảm xì chết
2. **Recharge my battery:** Nạp năng lượng
3. **Basic first aid:** Sơ cứu cơ bản
4. **To be in need of something:** Cần cái gì đó

63. Describe an ideal house

Describe an ideal house

You should say:

- where it is
- what it looks like
- when you would like to live in

And explain why you would like to live in it

Sample

So I'm going to talk about the perfect house that I would like to live in. I would like it to be spacious, **comfy** and tranquil and it should therefore be located in a rural area with a quiet and peaceful atmosphere.

Painted white and pink, the house would somehow look like a little palace for a royal family. Natural light is a must for this house, and it must contain an effective window system for good **ventilation**. The house would be equipped with modern appliances and air-conditioning for comfort and convenience. Trees and flowers would be planted around it for decoration and to make it look beautiful.

My ideal house, which would be full of natural light and surrounded by a lot of beautiful gardens, would be the perfect place for me when I am in need of relaxation, and an escape from my heavy workload in the city. I would be able to enjoy the fresh air, and living there would be the perfect way to relieve stress.

To be honest, having the chance to live in such a house would be a dream come true for me, feeling like a king in his own castle, and I hope that one day I can actually build a house like this to live in.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Comfy:** thoải mái
2. **Ventilation:** thông thoáng

64. Describe a book you liked to read in your childhood

Describe a book you liked to read in your childhood

You should say:

- who wrote this book
- what it is about
- when you read it

and explain why you liked it.

Sample

Well, I'm going to share with you the book that I was really fond of reading when I was a little girl, which is Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone. It's a fantasy novel written by the British author J. K. Rowling, and she became really popular all over the world now thanks to this fantastic series of books.

The book illustrates the school life of a young wizard, Harry Potter, and his two best friends Ron and Hermione. Harry had a powerful enemy, the Dark Wizard, Lord Voldemort, who longed for immortality and to rule the magic world.

I started reading this book when I was about 8 years old I think. At that time, I was only beginning to improve my reading skills, and Harry Potter was quite a thick book so it took me ages to get through it.

As a little girl, I didn't understand all the details in the book but I truly admired the story of Harry's friendship with Ron and Hermione. And I think it helped me to feel more confident to make friends with my classmates, some of whom I still keep in touch with now. And I guess that is the main reason why I appreciate this book so much.

65. Describe a success in your life

Describe a success in your life

You should say:

- when it was
- what it was
- why you chose it

how you achieved it.

Sample

Well, the success that I would like to share with you today is about my contribution to **a social activity** that occurred about 5 years back when I was just a freshman in college. I really feel proud of this achievement as I believe I have done something really good for society.

At that time, the local authorities in my hometown had planned to destroy a public park and build **a shopping mall complex** instead. I had taken notice of them cutting down the trees so I gathered my friends to protest, though it was a very complicated situation.

The reason for me to do that was because that park was the only **green space** and **recreational area** for the local people. They came there every day to exercise, and enjoy the fresh air in order to maintain and improve their health. As well as this, it's also **home to** a large number of wild birds and other animals, which I feel is a very important thing to conserve.

I know that going against the authorities is a really hard thing to do but I felt that I needed to do it for the sake of the community. We made some plans to contact the media and go to the local authorities to express our view and opinion, and in the end, we succeeded and the construction of the shopping mall was cancelled, so I feel like this really was a success in my life

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **A social activity:** Hoạt động xã hội
2. **A shopping mall complex:** Khu trung tâm mua sắm
3. **Green space:** Không gian xanh
4. **To be home to something:** Là nhà cho cái gì/con gì

66. Describe a time when you were looking at the sky

Describe a time when you were looking at the sky

You should say:

- When and where you looked at the sky
- Who you looked at sky with
- How you felt when looking at it

And explain why you looked at the sky

Sample

Looking at the sky seems like the sort of thing we might do every day without actually having any awareness of doing it. But today I want to share with you the time when I had an opportunity to look up into the sky from a city on the other side of the planet.

A couple of years ago I had a great opportunity to escape from the scorching hot summer in Hanoi to one of the most stunning cities in Europe, London. Usually the weather in London is pretty much day after day of **overcast clouds** and **dreariness** with high levels of rainfall throughout the year. However when I arrived in London, I guess I must have caught a lucky break in the clouds as the city was lit up in sunlight.

But while I was travelling from the airport to my hotel in the west part of London with my mother, I opened the car window to glance around and feel the wind on my skin and in my hair. By this point, the sun had disappeared and the sky was overcast and grey with loads of thick clouds. There were many people on the street walking in a hurry to avoid the rain, while others were too absorbed with their phones to even notice the coming rain.

I was so excited and curious about this huge city that I decided not to let the rain ruin my first day, even though I got **soaking wet** in the **heavy downpour** as I got out of the cab and moved my luggage. For the rest of the day, I spent my time looking at the sky from my hotel room's window while the rain kept pouring down. I love London, without a doubt, but that kind of weather totally made me feel depressed.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Overcast clouds and dreariness:** Bầu trời u ám và buồn tẻ
2. **Soaking wet:** Ướt nhảm
3. **Heavy downpour:** Mưa lớn

67. Describe an article you read about healthy life

Describe an article you read about healthy life

You should say:

- where you read it from
- when you read it
- what the article was about

And explain what you thought about this article

Sample

Today I want to share with you one of my most favorite articles of all time named “Ten ways to live longer”, which was published in the Guardian - a very famous British magazine, and is, in my opinion, a must-read article about human health and wellbeing.

I believe that the more people become wiser, the more they will care about their health. The first surprising thing I noticed about this article was about the country with the longest **life expectancy**, which was Japan, for both men and women. The question is, how do they do it? Well, apparently Japanese people simply have regular health check-ups and pay close attention to **hygiene** in every aspect of their lives. Avoiding a **sedentary lifestyle** is one of the golden rules of good health, yet this is still a major problem in many countries around the world. In other words, **get your running shoes on** and never just sit around all day. Another major point I learnt was that you should get your blood pressure checked regularly because high blood pressure is the number one factor that leads to early death and years of poor health.

According to the article, the ten things to do or avoid included some things like, not smoking, eating seeds-not junk, drinking in moderation, staying out of hospital, and not getting stressed, which all seem quite obvious but can certainly change your life if you follow these rules. You don't need to do strenuous or vigorous exercise in order to have better health. Simply drink a little bit less each day, add a little bit more vegetables to your diet and do something as simple as carrying your heavy shopping bags instead of using the trolley to improve your muscle strength at least two days a week. Sounds easy, right?

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Life expectancy:** Tuổi thọ
2. **Hygiene:** Vệ sinh
3. **A sedentary lifestyle:** Lối sống ít vận động
4. **Get your running shoes on:** Vận động

68. Describe a new skill you would like to learn

Describe a new skill you would like to learn

You should say:

- What it is
- Who you want to learn it from
- How you are going to learn it

And explain why you want to learn it

Sample

Today I would like to share with you about a skill I have always desired to learn, which is speaking German.

A couple of years ago I had such a fantastic trip to Europe, and I was deeply impressed by the beauty, uniqueness and modern style of the capital city, Berlin. I was wandering around all over the city in many different shopping malls to find my dad his favorite black Nike coat. I was fortunate enough to finally find it in the Kaufland shopping mall, however, when I flew back to Vietnam, I realized that I had bought the female size. So it was after that incident that I decided to **try my hand at** learning German.

The first reason that makes German such an attractive language to learn is that it is pretty much the second most common language spoken in Europe, for example, in Denmark, Hungary, Poland, Austria, and so on. And secondly, German **bears a close resemblance** to English, and shares pretty much the same alphabet, so I think that might make it a little easier to learn. Additionally, if I learn German, in the future I could certainly apply for a scholarship to study in Germany's great education system.

I think learning a new language can also be really handy when travelling, can make you more decisive and can bring you multitudes of cognitive advantages such as becoming smarter and avoiding Alzheimer's disease when you get older. And last but not least, I think life would be much more exciting if you can speak multiple languages.

So, sometime in the near future, if I can handle my work and study load, I'd love to give learning German a go.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Try my hand at doing something:** Thử làm gì
2. **Bear a close resemblance:** Có điểm giống

69. Describe one activity stopped by the weather

Describe one activity stopped by the weather

You should say:

- When and where it happened
- Who was involved
- What the activity was

And what you did after the activity was stopped

Sample

Anyone who is a big fan of tennis definitely knows the name of tennis legend Novak Djokovic. And today I'm going to tell you about the story of how I **skipped school** to watch the big game that didn't happen between Novak Djokovic and Dominic Thiem at the 2017 Roland Garros.

You know, I've been fascinated by the wonderful world of tennis since I first discovered the sport. My dad and I would always just sit around like a pair of **couch potato's** whenever a big tennis competition was on. Novak has long been my hero on the court while my father has always been a big fan of Roger Federer. I always love watching a tennis match with my favourite player, whether he wins or loses, and I still love him either way because that's just **the way things go** sometimes. I still admire his sportsmanship and talent and the way he elegantly yet powerfully moves on the court.

On this particular day though of the quarterfinals Novak had to defeat Thiem to go through to the semi-final and I was so excited to watch this game because Novak had previously lost the Roland Garros cup before two years in a row. Unfortunately, I had an unavoidable mid-term test that day which meant it was impossible for me to watch the game live. But after **wrestling with my conscience**, I decided to tell a lie to my dad so that I could stay at home to watch the match. However, the weather in Paris that day turned out to be so terrible that the game was cancelled.

I felt so guilty when I found out that the game was cancelled, and I got into big trouble by my dad for not showing up to take the mid-term test at school.

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Skip school:** trốn học
2. **Couch potato:** Người lười biếng
3. **It's just the way things go:** Dùng để nói đây là điều hiển nhiên
4. **Wrestle with one's conscience:** Đấu tranh tư tưởng

70. Describe a person who gave a clever solution to a problem

Describe a person who gave a clever solution to a problem

You should say:

- Who the person is
- When and where it happened
- What the problem was

And explain why it was a clever solution

Sample

To ‘**think outside of the box**’ is always the term that comes to mind whenever a problem arises and not everyone succeeds in coming up with a solution, but there is one person on this planet though who always surprises me with his cleverness and ability to come up with a solution to even some of the toughest problems. His name is Nam and he’s my older brother.

My mother always told us that even though we’re brothers and we have a **close-knit relationship**, we’re still as different as two people could possibly be. I’m quite an active person and have a tendency to make very quick decisions, while my brother is extremely calm and usually solves problems in a **level-headed** kind of way, and that’s the reason why he has been a kind of **savior** to me on a number of occasions.

There was a time that I consider as an important **landmark** in my life which was when I took the entrance exam to university. And similar to my mother, I suffer from **hypotension** which is low blood pressure and sometimes causes **dizziness** when I’m hungry or tired. In certain circumstances, I just need the sugar from a couple of candy bars to recover, but actually I’m quite an **absent-minded** person so I usually forget to carry any with me.

On that day, when the start of the examination was getting nearer, I was so nervous that I couldn’t think clearly and my hands had begun to shake. All of a sudden I found some tiny chocolate bars in my pocket, and they absolutely saved my life! In the end, it turned out that my brother remembered to put some in my pocket for me in order to avoid this situation. So thoughtful and so smart he was to do such a thing!

Vocabulary highlights:

1. **Think outside of the box:** Nghĩ thoát hơn
2. **A close-knit relationship:** Mối quan hệ khăng khít
3. **Level-headed:** bình tĩnh và thấu đáo
4. **Hypotension:** huyết áp thấp
5. **Absent-minded:** hay quên